1718

R. R. RICHARDSON.

Christmas in the Sunrise Kingdom

By ADA BRIGGS WEBBER

Literary Supplement

AMERICAN BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY, Boston
WOMAN'S BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY, Boston
WOMAN'S BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE WEST
Chicago

SUGGESTIONS

GENERAL. Every part of the program needs careful preparation so that it can be carried through without announcement. The promptness with which each part is taken will add to the spontaneity and maintain the interest of the audience and the participants.

Characters.

PASTOR.
SUPERINTENDENT.

MR. BROWN, the missionary.
MISS SMITH, the mission school teacher.

JIRO SAN, TARO SAN } Two young Japanese gentlemen.

O HANA SAN, O NATSU SAN } Two young Japanese girls, who attend the mission school.

TODA SAN, Superintendent of the Japanese Sunday School.

The Japanese Sunday School, boys and girls of Sunday school, any number.

Setting: Time, evening. Place, a Japanese church. Decorations made largely of paper, white and all kinds of bright colors intermingled. Little flags of all kinds made thus very cheaply, each about five or six inches long, are often, in Japan, festooned on strings in all directions overhead. Small paper streamers and little lanterns are also used the same way; also paper chains, each link made of a strip of colored paper, perhaps seven to nine inches long. Strips of fancifully cut tissue papers are not uncommon. Green foliage is used, and mottoes—Chinese characters worked in evergreens or gilt or red paper. Little tinsel stars are often hung around, glass baubles, etc. To make the decorations more effective there should be a little Christmas tree on the left-hand side of the platform, hung with little Japanese lanterns, etc., although the tree may be omitted. The members of the younger departments of the Sunday school may occupy the center of the platform, but seated far enough back to allow the immediate front for the individual participants.

Costumes. The children should so far as possible wear the Japanese kimono. This is a long, loose garment that reaches from the neck to the feet. It is folded across the breast in front and tied around the waist by a sash or girdle, the girls wearing the sash, the boys the girdle. The sash worn by the girls is about ten feet long and two feet wide and is considered the most important part of the costume. It is tied in a great bow in the back. The boys' girdle is much narrower and less conspicuous. The sleeves are long and full. The ends, which hang down at least to the knees, are sewed up as far as the wrist, leaving room for the hand to slip in and out. If a kimono pattern is desired, one can be obtained from any of the prominent pattern firms. If there is a Japanese store near at hand, a very effective addition to the costume would be the mitten-like Japanese stockings and wooden clogs. The little Japanese girls often have their hair tied up with gold cord on great feast days, with a rather severe pompadour in front and the hair gathered in a soft knot on the top of the head, just as the older girls wear it. Little ones with short hair wear the hair very simply, without immense bows. There are so many Japanese illustrations in magazines and on postcards that if there is any doubt, it is easy to consult these.

Toda San, Jiro San, and Taro San all wear conventional American clothes, as also do Mr. Brown, the missionary, and Miss Smith, the mission school-teacher.

Japanese Bow. The low Japanese bow should be practised beforehand, as it is rather difficult of accomplishment. The person bowing clasps the hands loosely in front and bends the body until he makes a right angle, with the head about on a level with the belt. The Japanese bow is much more premeditated than the American. It is a slow and deep inclination full of grace and courtliness.

Christmas in the Sunrise Kingdom

I

SINGING. (*By School.*) "Chime the Bells."

II

RESPONSIVE EXERCISE (Isaiah 42: 1-12). (*By Superintendent and School.*)

III

PRAYER. (*By Pastor.*)

IV

SINGING. (*By School.*) "Stars of the Holy Night."

V

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS. (*By Superintendent.*)

A few words of explanation may be necessary before we present our exercise, *Christmas in the Sunrise Kingdom.* Recently our thoughts and interest have been directed especially toward the Sunrise Kingdom, and the service of the evening is in line with such thought.

The scene is laid in a Japanese church on Christmas night, and the exercise opens with a conversation between a missionary, a mission school teacher, two Japanese girls, and two Japanese young men who are not Christians but are interested enough to seek out the missionary to talk with him on religious matters. The instances of conversion narrated are not imaginary, but actual cases on record in our own mission work. The remainder of the program needs no explanation.

VI

EXERCISE. "The Christmas Message."

(*Mr. Brown, the missionary, is seen busily putting the finishing touches on the tree, or if the tree is not used, is hanging a wreath or a motto on the wall. Taro San and Jiro San enter from the right. Mr. Brown hears them approach, turns around and advances toward the center of the platform to meet them.*)

MISSIONARY. (*Shaking hands cordially.*) —Good day, Taro San, good day, Jiro San. I am very glad to see you and wish you both a Happy Christmas. Won't you sit down?

(*Takes three chairs from those in the center of the platform, and puts them at the front. Missionary seats himself in chair at the left, the two young men take the other two. Chairs arranged as in ordinary conversation.*)

JIRO.—Thank you, Mr. Brown. We fear to intrude on your valuable time, but Taro San and I heard you say that Japan would never reach success until she had a Christmas. We went to your home, and there we were told that we would find you at the church. So we have come here to ask you what you meant.

MISSIONARY.—Yes, I remember: I meant that a nation is a true success only when its people have received God's Christmas gift.

TARO (*proudly*).—But, Mr. Brown, we think we *are* a success and all the world says we are a wonderful people. Just look at our magnificent army and navy and think of its victories.

MISSIONARY.—Yes, it is a great military power—but the *men,* are they nobler characters because they use rifles instead of the old style sword?

TARO.—Why, no I suppose not. In truth, to the Samurai the gun seems cowardly.

JIRO.—The world praises our wonderful industrial development. We now have great factories, going night and day, in all our cities.

MISSIONARY.—Yes, but the thousands on thousands of *men* and *women,* of *boys* and *girls,* have they become better in heart and life since they left the simple work in their homes, and crowded into the noise and dirt of the factories?

JIRO.—Surely they have not.

TARO.—I see what you mean. We forget the *person* in seeking the *thing.* In education, however, our aim has been to develop character. For over a generation we have looked to our splendid system of universal education to lead up to the highest manhood.

MISSIONARY.—Yes, it is a strong up-to-date system of secular education and it has had a free field. Has it accomplished its purpose? Let us look for results. That sad list of young men who have committed suicide recently, who are they?

JIRO (*sadly*). — Mostly students — some of the brightest.

MISSIONARY.—That investigation in regard to immorality in high schools and colleges in Tokyo, what was discovered?

JIRO.—Please don't ask — it cannot be mentioned.

TARO (*after a thoughtful pause*).—Mr. Brown, I hesitate to mention anything

else, but I must speak of the natural beauty of Japan and the love of the beautiful so characteristic of our people. Here surely is an elevating influence.

MISSIONARY.—We always in thought associate beauty with holiness, but in fact, what do we see? After centuries, amid this marvelous beauty in mountain and lake, in tree and flower, is it not true that even going to see the plum or cherry blossoms in their chaste beauty is all too frequently an occasion of debauchery, and that all over the empire tens of thousands of your beautiful young women are shamelessly living lives of shame?

TARO.—We cannot deny it.

JIRO.—Are not the teachings of Confucius splendid ethical teachings? Men must be uplifted by studying them.

MISSIONARY.—With great wisdom Confucius and Mencius teach how man should treat man, but the test is their fruit. Look at the Chinese, who, more faithfully than you, have studied these classics for many centuries — are they sympathetic? See the idle curiosity of the crowd at a public execution; see them failing to help famine sufferers in a neighboring province — and actually driving famine refugees away from their cities.

TARO.—We must admit that man's heart is not changed by any of these influences, but do you claim that your Christmas message is powerful enough for even that?

MISSIONARY.—How can I best explain Christmas to you? Miss Smith was teaching some of the schoolgirls a hymn which I wish you could hear. I will ask her for it.

(*Goes to door at left. Returns with Miss Smith and two Japanese girls. The two young men rise, bow (low Japanese bow), and the girls standing modestly, rather in the background, sing*)

"O Little Town of Bethlehem."
(*Words very distinct, bringing out meaning.*)

(*Girls bow and retire, the others remain standing.*)

JIRO (*earnestly*).—Miss Smith, does Christ really enter into men's hearts today and drive out sin?

MISS SMITH.—The girls who just sang are examples. When O Hana San came to the school she was frivolous, selfish, and disobedient, caring for dress only. She came to know and trust in Christ and is now one of our earnest students and always on the lookout for chances to help others. She is love and sunshine in the school.

TARO.—That is interesting, but to care for self and to like ribbons does not make one a great sinner.

MISS SMITH.—No? Well, O Natsu San was an unusually bad girl. It seemed natural for her to steal and lie; kindness and severity alike were of no effect in awakening her conscience. We were in despair, saying that she must be somehow morally lacking. Then she, too, was remarkably led to see that God loved her and that she was grieving him. In tears and penitence she confessed her wickedness and besought God, for Christ's sake, to forgive her. We can only describe her now as one born anew, a transformed character, loved and trusted by all.

JIRO.—That is wonderful, but Miss Smith, they are girls (*with slight disdain.*)

MISSIONARY.—Let me sketch the life of Kochi San, an orphan at six, developing in all the wickedness of Tokyo till at eighteen he was condemned to death for a horrible murder — sentence changed to life imprisonment — heard of Bible, day and night for years memorizing it — its message reached his heart — *the Saviour, welcomed, drove out sin* — taught the story of Christ to 300 fellow prisoners — recognized by the jailers as a power for good — the story of the transformed life reached the ear of the Emperor, who pardoned him after twenty-three years in prison — is now loyally serving his country by pointing sinners to the Saviour — by special permission of the government is telling his story in all the prisons of the empire with wonderful results in the lives of the men. There is this power in the Christ who came to save his people from their sins.

JIRO (*thoughtfully*).—We thank you for this strange teaching. When may we hear more?

MISS SMITH (*hospitably*).—We are about to have our Sunday school Christmas concert. Won't you both stay for it?

JIRO.—Thank you, you are very kind. We will stay.

(*Exit Miss Smith. Taro and Jiro assist Mr. Brown in hanging the few remaining ornaments on the Christmas tree, or if there is no Christmas tree, in putting the last touches on wall decorations*).

VII

SINGING. (*By School.*) "Shine Out, Oh, Blessed Star!"

(*Processional. As the music first begins to sound from afar, Mr. Brown, Jiro and Taro take seats at the extreme right-hand side of the platform. The singing grows louder and clearer and the children (any number) of all ages to fourteen or fifteen, march in, girls and boys dressed in kimonos if possible. They march, still singing, to the seats in readiness for them in the center of the platform, and remain standing until they finish the song. The Japanese superintendent, Toda San, comes in with them. After they are seated, the missionary rises, comes to the front and says*)

We are now to have the pleasure of attending the Christmas exercises in a Japanese Sunday school. Let me introduce Toda San, who is the superintendent. He will take charge of the program. We count ourselves happy in being permitted to witness such a scene.

(*He then takes his seat again beside Taro and Jiro, while Toda San assumes the place of presiding officer.*)

TODA SAN.—Children, why have we all such shining, joyful faces to-night?

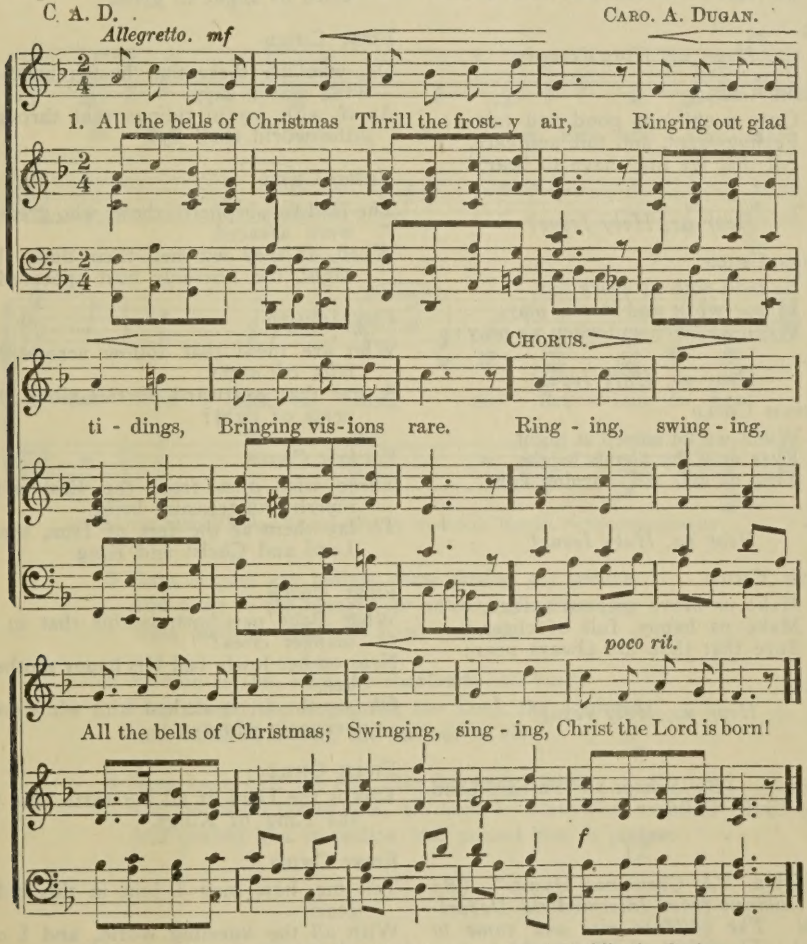
CHILDREN.—Because it is Christmas time.

TODA SAN.—And what does Christmas mean to us?

CHILDREN (*or one child*).—It means that Jesus Christ our Saviour has come to live in our hearts.

VIII

SINGING. (*By Primary Department.*) "All the Bells of Christmas."


C. A. D.
CARO. A. DUGAN.
Allegretto. mf
1. All the bells of Christmas Thrill the frost- y air, Ringing out glad
CHORUS.
ti - dings, Bringing vis-ions rare. Ring - ing, swing - ing,
poco rit.
All the bells of Christmas; Swinging, sing - ing, Christ the Lord is born!
f

From "Childhood Songs," Copyright by American Baptist Publication Society.

2 Lo! the wond'ring shepherds
In the early dawn
Hear the angels singing—
"Joy, the Christ is born!"

3 "Glory in the highest!"
It is Christmas morn!
Shout the gladsome tidings,
Christ the Lord is born!

IX

EXERCISE. "Hear Us, Holy Jesus." (*By five children.*)

TODA SAN.—Five of the children will pray to Jesus, and we will all bow our heads reverently.

(*Children rise, come to front, form semi-circle, fold hands and bend heads.*)

FIRST CHILD.

Jesus, once an infant small,
Cradled in the oxen's stall,
Though the God and Lord of all:

ALL

Hear us, Holy Jesus!

SECOND CHILD

Once a child so good and fair,
Feeling want, and toil, and care,
All that we may have to bear,

ALL

Hear us, Holy Jesus!

THIRD CHILD

Be thou with us every day,
In our work and in our play,
When we learn and when we pray:

ALL

Hear us, Holy Jesus!

FOURTH CHILD

When we lie asleep at night,
Ever may thy angels bright,
Keep us safe till morning light.

ALL

Hear us, Holy Jesus!

FIFTH CHILD

Make us brave without a fear,
Make us happy, full of cheer,
Sure that thou art always near:

ALL

Hear us, Holy Jesus!

X

SINGING. (*By School.*) "Father, Lead Thy Little Children."

XI

EXERCISE. "A Christmas Hymn." (*By six children from Intermediate Department. The children rise and come to front. The "first child" stands on extreme left of the semi-circle and slightly faces the other children.*)

FIRST CHILD

Tell me what is this innumerable throng
Singing in the heavens a loud angelic song?

SECOND CHILD

These are they who come with swift and shining feet
From round about the throne of God the Lord of Light to greet.

FIRST CHILD

Oh, who are these that hasten beneath the starry sky,
As if with joyful tidings that through the world shall fly?

THIRD CHILD

The faithful shepherds these, who greatly were afeared
When, as they watched their flocks by night, the heavenly host appeared.

FIRST CHILD

Who are these that follow across the hills of night
A star that westward hurries along the fields of light?

FOURTH CHILD

Three wise men from the East who myrrh and treasure bring
To lay them at the feet of Him, their Lord and Christ and King.

FIRST CHILD

What Babe new-born is this that in a manger cries?
Near on her lowly bed His happy mother lies.
Oh, see the air is shaken with white and heavenly wings—

FIFTH CHILD

This is the Lord of all the earth, this is the King of Kings.

FIRST CHILD

Tell me, how may I join in this holy feast
With all the kneeling world, and I of all the least?

SIXTH CHILD

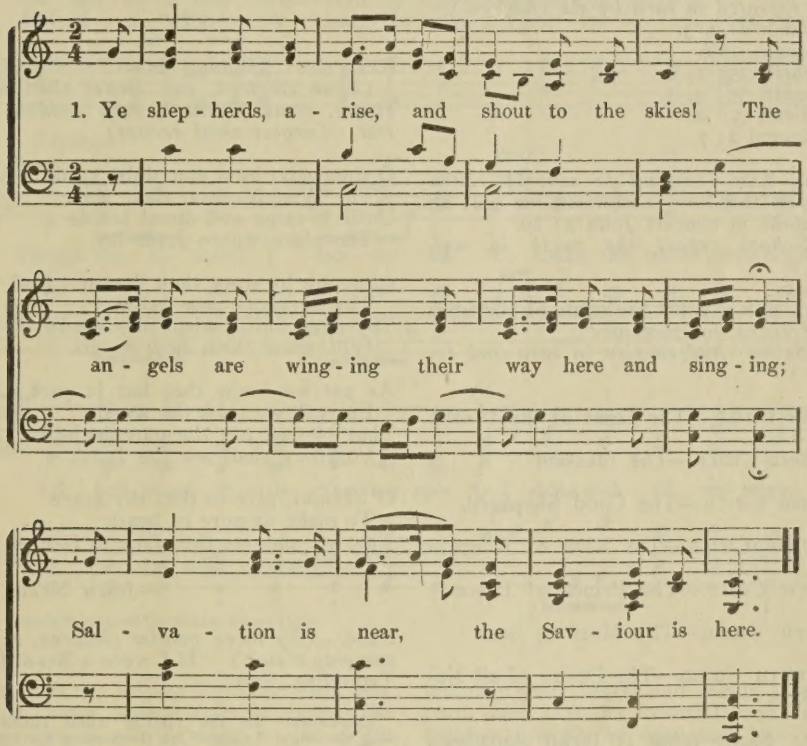
Fear not, O faithful heart, but bring
what most is meet:
Bring love alone, true love alone, and
lay it at His feet.

—RICHARD WATSON GILDER

XII

SINGING. (*By Primary Department or selected voices.*) "Ye Shepherds Arise."

REINECKE.


1. Ye shep - herds, a - rise, and shout to the skies! The
an - gels are wing - ing their way here and sing - ing;
Sal - va - tion is near, the Sav - iour is here.

From "Childhood Songs," Copyright by American Baptist Publication Society.

2 Come singing gay psalms, come singing gay psalms,
And come to the manger, to welcome the Stranger,
Who, born in a stall, is Lord over all.

3 As soon as this word the shepherds had heard
They sought the Appointed, the Lord, the Anointed,
And found in a stall, the Saviour of all.

4 They knew him the mild, the heavenly Child,
And fell down before him, all meek to adore him
And praised him in psalms, and praised him in psalms.

XIII

BIBLE EXERCISE. "The Saviour of the World."

TODA SAN.—Some of the children have scripture verses from the Old Testament to recite. You may stand as I give the references.

(*As the references are called for they are repeated in turn by six children.*)

Isaiah 2: 2, 3.
Isaiah, 9: 6.
Isaiah 35: 1, 2.
Isaiah 55: 4, 5.
Micah 5: 2.
Haggai 2: 7.

TODA SAN (*turning to school*).—Now from the New Testament we will all repeat in concert John 3: 16.

(*School repeat the verse in unison.*)

TODA SAN.—What are some of the titles given to our Saviour?

(*Seven children rise in turn and recite.*)

FIRST CHILD.—The Light of the World.

SECOND CHILD.—The Messiah.

THIRD CHILD.—The Good Shepherd.

FOURTH CHILD.—The King of Kings.

FIFTH CHILD.—The Prince of Peace.

SIXTH CHILD.—The Morning Star.

SEVENTH CHILD.—The Desire of all Nations.

TODA SAN.—What is Japan sometimes called?

CHILDREN (*in concert*).—The Sunrise Kingdom.

TODA SAN.—What light does Japan need most today?

CHILDREN (*in concert*).—The light that shines from Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness.

XIV

EXERCISE. "Shining Stars."

(*Four children, one larger than the others, come forward, each holding a star. Largest child recites*)

O thou who by a star didst guide
The Wise-Men on their way,
Until it came and stood beside
The place where Jesus lay.

Although by stars thou dost not lead
Thy servants now below,
Thy Holy Spirit, when they need
Will show them how to go.

As yet we know thee but in part,
But still we trust thy word,
That blessed are the pure in heart,
For they shall see the Lord.

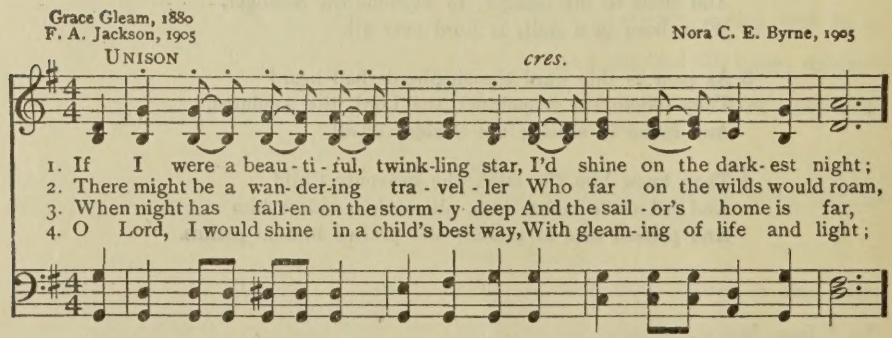
O Saviour, give us then thy grace
To make us pure in heart,
That we may see thee face to face
Hereafter as thou art.

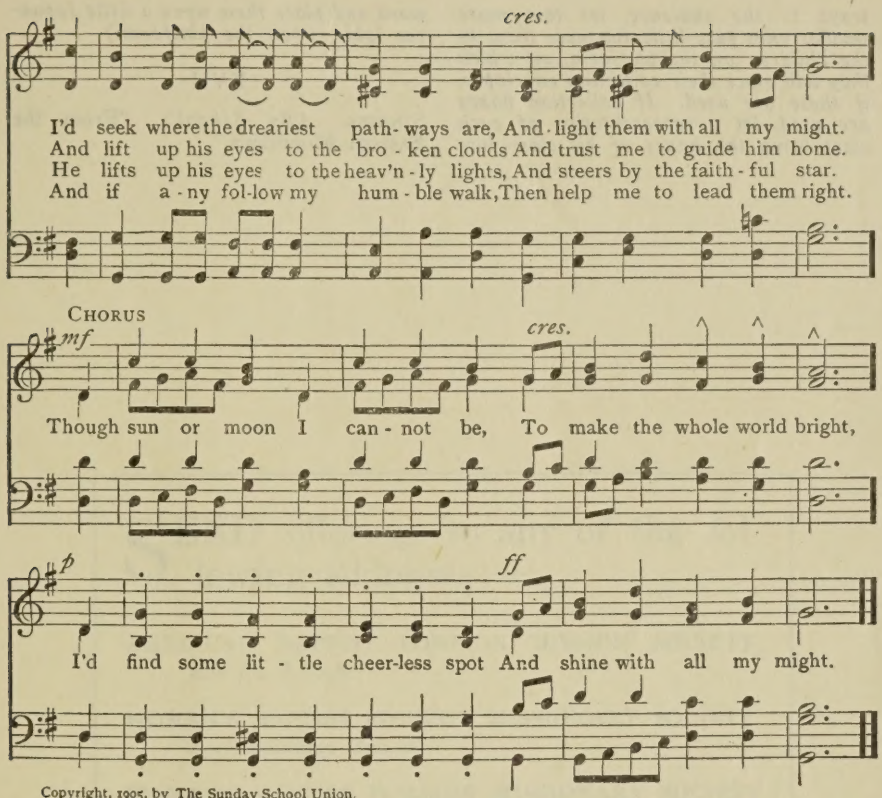
—JOHN NEALE.

SONG. (*By three smaller children, each carrying a star.*) "If I were a Beautiful Twinkling Star."

(MOTIONS. In the chorus when children sing the word "shine," let them raise the stars on high, and sing joyfully.

Let the fourth verse be sung very softly, the children bending their heads devoutly.)


Grace Gleam, 1880
F. A. Jackson, 1905
Nora C. E. Byrne, 1905
UNISON
cres.
1. If I were a beau - ti - ful, twink-ling star, I'd shine on the dark - est night;
2. There might be a wan - der-ing tra - vel - ler Who far on the wilds would roam,
3. When night has fall-en on the storm - y deep And the sail - or's home is far,
4. O Lord, I would shine in a child's best way, With gleam-ing of life and light;


cres.
I'd seek where the dreariest path-ways are, And light them with all my might.
And lift up his eyes to the bro-ken clouds And trust me to guide him home.
He lifts up his eyes to the heav'n-ly lights, And steers by the faith-ful star.
And if a-ny fol-low my hum-ble walk, Then help me to lead them right.
CHORUS
mf
cres.
Though sun or moon I can-not be, To make the whole world bright,
p
ff
I'd find some lit-tle cheer-less spot And shine with all my might.

Copyright, 1905, by The Sunday School Union.

(*After the singing Taro and Jiro, who have shown intense interest during the program, rise and walk to the front of the platform and address Toda San, who rises as they approach.*)

TARO SAN (*with deep emotion*).—Dimly do I begin to understand what Mr. Brown meant when he said that Japan would never attain success until she had a Christmas. Purity, faith, love—in truth, all that is good and beautiful—seem embodied in this Christmas gift of God. I must learn more of it!

JIRO SAN (*with equal earnestness*). And I. Will you kindly sell us copies of your Bible that we may study and ponder over this wonderful Jesus who to all that believed has promised everlasting life?

TODA SAN.—My prayer is that the same True Light which guided the Wise-Men to the feet of the Infant Jesus may illuminate your hearts and minds as you read, and that its celestial rays, still shining through the ages, may lead you and all Japan to the throne of God, in whom alone are peace, joy, love, and happiness.

XV

GREETING. (*By Pastor.*)

XVI

OFFERING. For Foreign Missions.

(*Opportunity is given for all to contribute. Toda San rises and facing audience says*)

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glory your Father who is in heaven.

(*Let four little children be chosen to pass small Japanese trays for the offering. While these are passing the*

trays to the audience, let two more smaller ones pass little Japanese trays to the children on the platform, on which they will place their collection envelopes, if these are used. If collection boxes are used, let a representative of each class bring the boxes of his class forward and place them upon a little Japanese table, upon the platform.)

XVII

SINGING. (*By School.*) "From the Eastern Mountains."

SEND offerings to any of the following addresses:—

AMERICAN BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSION SOCIETY,
Box 41, Boston.

WOMAN'S BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
Ford Building, Boston.

WOMAN'S BAPTIST FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY
OF THE WEST, 450 East 30th Street, Chicago.

1 Ed.—20M—Oct. '10